



Disability Federation of Ireland

Newsletter

An Advocate for the Voluntary Disability Sector.
Supporting Organisations to Enable People with Disabilities

November 2008

The Crisis in Disability Funding 2009

The Budget announced on 14 October marked a huge change in Ireland's fiscal (tax and spend) policy. Although the Minister of Finance, Brian Lenihan, T.D., stated in his Budget address, "We are determined to protect the most vulnerable in our society", in fact the Budget was very severe from the perspective of people with a disability.

Keep in mind that the 2009 Budget's restrictions on funding for services come on top of the finding by the Auditor and Comptroller General in their Annual Report published in August 2009 that €53 million in funds allocated to disability and mental health services in 2007 in fact was diverted by the HSE to cover spending overruns elsewhere. This is on top of the already well known decision made in July by Government, the Department of Health and the HSEs to divert €17 m of the 2008 Multi Annual Funding Programme from the disability sector.

DFI is working with member organisations to alert decision-makers about the unacceptable consequences of this new environment for people with disabilities, pointing out

- The virtual disappearance of the Multi Annual Funding programme;
- Cutbacks under various pretexts, such that voluntary disability organisations may well face budgets in 2009 that are 6% below the level in 2008.
- Further postponement of the Personal Advocacy Service and implementation of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004;
- The absence of any move to introduce a cost of disability payment;
- An increase in social welfare rates that will not compensate for higher fuel and food prices.

This Budgetary regime undermines the essentials of the National Disability Strategy, not to mention the severe loss at the level of the day-to-day lives of disabled people. The disability sector must strengthen its voice to ensure Government, the Department of Health and Children and the HSE commitment to ensuring that funding promised to disability cannot be redirected in 2009.

John Dolan
CEO

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NEW MEMBERS

DFI would like to welcome the following new organisations to our growing membership.

North West Stroke Club

The North West Stroke Club have joined DFI as General Members. The North West Stroke Club aims to provide support to those directly impacted by a stroke and their carers and to provide information and increase awareness

Donegal CIL

The main Aims and Objectives of Donegal Centre for Independent Living is to promote Empowerment, Independence and rights to people with physical and sensory disabilities through the provision of Services, such as personal assistant service. DCIL is an organisation controlled by people with disabilities, which meets their objectives towards Independent Living. DCIL consistently aims to promote and encourage the philosophy of independent living in practical terms and so provide an extensive service throughout the County.

John Grooms

John Grooms believe everyone should have the freedom to live their lives and have the chance to use their abilities. They offer a wide range of innovative services to support and empower disabled people throughout their lives. They also provide community organisations with the resources, advice and confidence to impact their neighbourhoods.

The Carers Association

The Carers Association aims to provide family carers with on-hand and practical supports; to promote the interest of family carers and those receiving care in the home through effective partnership, lobbying and advocacy and to gain recognition and social justice for carers invaluable contribution to Irish society

ilikecake

ilikecake have recently joined as a DFI Associate. ilikecake.net is an accessible design development and consultation organisation for clients mostly in the State sponsored charity and voluntary sector.

Sonas aPc

Sonas aPc aims to enhance the quality of life and activate the potential of older people with impaired communication, by providing training to carers and care-providing organisations and to promote awareness and understanding of communication in dementia to the wider community

DFI Pre-Budget Discussion Forum 2009



John Dolan Chief Executive Officer Disability Federation of Ireland

The DFI Pre-Budget Discussion Forum took place on the 2nd of October in the Mansion House. Members of the Oireachtas, DFI member organisation and other groups within the community and voluntary sector were invited to attend the event. The forum centred on the *DFI Pre-Budget Submission 2009* which was made available in August this year.

A major issue of concern raised at the Pre-Budget Discussion Forum was the underfunding of disability services and 1% cuts imposed by the HSE on disability service providers. It was noted that already up to €17m had been cut from Multi-Annual Funding in 2008 and re-directed to other areas of the HSE¹.

The meeting was addressed by spokespersons from the Government and the Opposition. Séan Ó Fearghail (Chair of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health) spoke on behalf of the Government, while the Opposition was represented by David Stanton (Fine Gael), Jan O'Sullivan (Labour), and Aengus Ó Snodaigh (Sinn Féin).

Séan Ó Fearghail (Fianna Fáil) underlined that everyone is very conscious of the current budgetary constraints, and that he was not in a position to make any commitments. He pointed out that the Taoiseach has demonstrated his own personal commitment to the disability agenda, and that he has received a copy of the DFI Pre-Budget Submission and has discussed this with Minister John Moloney.

¹ See DFI Budget Analysis for more information

David Stanton (Fine Gael) raised the issue of underfunding for disability organisations. He discussed how a number of disability groups have contacted him with concerns about their future. Many of these fundraise continuously, and this is difficult in the current economic climate. He considered that during his address, Séan Ó Fearghail mentioned the HSE and funding being diverted to other areas. David Stanton suggested it should be possible to track money that is voted by the Oireachtas for disability services, but unfortunately it is not easy to do so. He suggested that the Dáil Committee should do this. Finally, Deputy Stanton made the point that Fine Gael believes strongly that the assessment of need for the under 5 year olds as part of the Disability Act must continue, as must education commitments under EPSEN and further commitments under the Citizens Information Act.

Jan O'Sullivan (Labour) noted that in the last 24 hours a safety net had been put in place for banks and financial institutions, but that no such safety net had been put in place for people with disabilities. Unfortunately, when the Disability Act was published we did not get the rights based legislation that we had sought, and we are seeing the fruits of that now. It seems that the disability sector must fight to ensure that its agenda is kept as a priority, as has been stated by Minister Cowen. Deputy O'Sullivan committed to the Labour Party continuing to fight for all of these issues.

One of the main points of the *DFI Pre-Budget Submission 2009* is the introduction of a cost of disability payment. According to Aengus Ó Snodaigh the cost of disability payment is vital to individuals to enable them to have a better life. Furthermore, community and voluntary organisations must be funded to ensure that they can deliver the services and supports to people with disabilities, and this includes funding to make up for core deficits in the past and for capacity building support for these organisations. The event received much national and local coverage in the media. DFI would encourage all our member organisations to push the issues in relation to underfunding in light of cuts to the Budget 2009.

DFI wishes to thank all those who supported the event.

Budget Analysis 2009

The Minister of Finance in his Budget speech stated, "We are determined to protect the most vulnerable in our society and we will redirect resources to that end." But this determination to protect is difficult to reconcile with the impact of his budget on people with disabilities, especially in relation to health, the lynchpin of the National Disability Strategy (NDS). Some of the key Budget provisions relating to disability are noted in this article, but as reported in the media, there are numerous other changes that will adversely affect people with disabilities.

Health

The Budget fails to tackle the key service deficit areas identified under the NDS, and places even further strain on the voluntary organisations who provide the specialist services and supports critical to people with disabilities. The priority given to disability in *Towards 2016* and other government documents is conspicuously absent from the budgeting of resources for the health system for 2009.

The Multiannual Funding allocation for 2009 has been slashed from the original commitment of €50 million to €10 million, and the developments to receive funding differ from those that had been identified as the priority.

Voluntary disability services providers face a 1% cut in funding, on top of the cut taken in 2008, effectively negating the €10 million contribution to disability.

These cutbacks are occurring in an environment where the HSE has been withdrawing funding officially budgeted for disability by the Oireachtas, to the sum of €53 million in 2007 alone, according to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

In 2008, a further €17 million was diverted away from the €50 million Multi Annual Funding commitment, plus the HSE commenced a 1% cut in funding to organisations.

DFI calculates that it is prudent to estimate that organisations will be in the region of 6% short next year in their budgets; in other words, the existing levels of health and personal support services for people with disabilities are unlikely to be maintained.

An effective mechanism has yet to be put in place to prevent the HSE from again shifting disability and mental health funding to other areas in the coming year.

Education

Implementation of the EPSEN Act is again postponed, putting at risk the roll out of the Independent Assessment of Need of health, as well as educational services, for young people aged 5-18 years.

A few actions were announced to improve supports for school-age children, but there are also regressive measures.

An unspecified provision for additional Special Needs Assistant posts in September 2009.

€10 million for enhanced services for children with Special Education Needs, including funding extension of the National Educational Psychological Service to all schools by the end of 2009.

Cut in the provision for teacher-in-service education and school transport.

Closure of the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education.

Higher and adult education services relevant to people with disabilities are to experience cutbacks:

Restrictions of the Strategic Innovation Fund for higher education.

A cut of 500 places on the Back to Education initiative.

Social and Family Affairs

The Budget promises little progress towards income adequacy and improved opportunities to reduce benefits dependency:

The personal rates for disability benefits are to increase at the standard rate of €6.50 per week.

New eligibility restrictions were to be put in place to increase qualifying age for Disability Allowance (DA) from 16 to 18 years. However this change has now been withdrawn by the Minister pending further review. DFI had argued that the original budget proposal to increase the qualifying age for DA was made prematurely without taking into account the need for a Cost of Disability Package and effective activation measures to pursue educational and training opportunities.

A central element of the NDS is the establishment of the Personal Advocacy Service under the Citizens Information Act 2007, but again no funding is provided in the Budget.

Training and Employment

The opportunities for participation envisaged in the NDS and in the long term goals for people with disabilities get very little boost from Budget 2009.

The 2009 Budget focuses on supports for the recently unemployed.

FÁS's specialist employment and training services for people with disabilities is to be 2% higher than what was spent in 2008. This does not keep pace with the rate of price inflation.

Moreover, programmes, such as the Wage Subsidy Scheme, that are still under development need to be protected to deliver their contribution to the NDS.

Environment

The impact of the Budget on environment services and facilities is mixed:

Although investment funds for the Capital Assistance Scheme (special housing for people with disabilities and older persons) are maintained at the 2008 level of €130 million, the lack of development funding in HSE may hold back new supported housing projects.

More positively, the Minister responsible for housing, Michael Finneran's statement about, "funding for housing supports for older people and people with disabilities increasing by 8%" suggests that the allocation for house adaptation grants may well improve in 2009.

The Budget 2009 Estimates show expenditure on disability services by Local Authorities falling from €5m to €4m on current in 2009, but capital staying at €10m. This portion of the Multi Annual Funding for disability helps to cover staff training, accessibility audits and other operational activities targeted at people with disabilities.

More information about the impact that budget cuts are having on disability services is required on an ongoing basis. Please contact Louise Mc Cann (DFI) if you would like to discuss these issues further or share how your services are being affected. Contact details are louisemccann@disability-federation.ie or 01 4250126.

Budget 2009:

Why Changes to Disability Allowance and Domiciliary Care Allowance were premature?

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs Mary Hanafin has announced that proposed changes introduced in Budget 2009 to increase the qualifying age of Disability Allowance from 16 to 18 years, while at the same time increasing Domiciliary Care Allowance to age 18, are to be postponed pending a further review. This was following the reaction and concerns expressed by disabled interest groups and families to be affected by these changes.

Disability Federation Ireland had argued that any measures to increase the age eligibility for DA from 16 to 18 years should not have been considered in isolation of a Cost of Disability Package and adequate activation measures for young people with disabilities.

Concerns have indeed been expressed with regard to the automatic entitlement of DA to young people with disabilities at age 16. There have been fears that entitling a 16 year old to a full adult payment of €197.50 a week on the basis that they had a disability would send out the wrong message and create a culture of dependency on social welfare. It was suggested that this policy could in fact act as a disincentive to stay in school or progress to further education, training or employment. DA by its very nature is a long term illness payment that carries little or no expectation or requirement for the recipient to work, unlike other benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance where recipients must prove they are actively looking for work in order to qualify for the

payment. This is also reinforced by the fact that DA customers are not accounted for on the live register.

In light of this argument one might ask why the proposed budgetary measure were criticised by families and young people affected by these changes, as well as groups advocating on behalf of disabled people. The lack of a Cost of Disability Payment can create financial hardship amongst families with a disabled child. While many are entitled to a Domiciliary Care Allowance of €299.60 per month this might not necessarily cover the costs associated with having a disability such as extra heating or dietary requirements. Furthermore, most medical cards are granted on the basis of a means test and are not based on need. Therefore families whose income is above a certain threshold are dependent on the discretion of the local health office. Where a medical card is not granted, a family is expected to cover extra medical expenses themselves.

Disability Allowance is not meant to be a family income support but is rather intended to support individual people with disabilities who require financial assistance from the State. It is in fact, the lack of a Cost of Disability payment that gives the prospect of Disability Allowance some comfort to parents of a child with a disability. Disability Allowance represented an increase in income from €299.60 to €791.20 per month. This is particularly relevant for families incurring high costs associated with the disability. The entitlement to secondary benefits associated with Disability Allowance such as a medical card and a free travel pass is of special value to parents caring for a disabled child.

DFI have continued to argue for the issue of Cost of Disability to be progressed for many years. We believe it must form the central part of any review of disability payment schemes, including DA. We recognise that the commitment to review a Cost of Disability Payment outlined in both the Programme for Government and the Social Partnership Agreement *Towards 2016* and were disappointed that these have yet to be progressed.

HEALTH

HSE Review of Adult Funded Day Services

The HSE review of adult funded day services is continuing. Anne Melly, National Working Group Project Manager, gave an update on the current status of the Review to DFI members on Monday 3rd November. If you would like further information on this presentation, please contact Jacqueline Thomson at 01 708 0108 or at jacquelinethomson@disability-federation.ie.

As part of this review, a seminar is going to take place on the 19th November in the Mullingar Park Hotel to enable shared learning between service users and providers regarding recent innovations and service change that is reflective of the four key themes that have been identified in the review to date – community integration, person-centred planning, collaborative working and the development of advocacy. The seminar will consist of examples of innovative practice and demonstrate the sector's ability to implement the changes that will be required to activate the recommendations which will be contained in the report of the review. Further information can be found on the Day Service Review website www.dayservicereview.ie or by e-mailing dayservice.review@hse.ie.

TOWARDS 2016 / NDS

Towards 2016: Review and Transitional Agreement, 2008-2009

The social partnership agreement *Towards 2016* stipulated that a formal review would take place in 2008 to take stock of the outcomes achieved and to consider any opportunities arising to refocus and reprioritise. The *Review and Transitional Agreement*, published recently by the Department of the Taoiseach, sets the social partnership agenda until December 2009. It has implications for the disability sector.

- It signals reprioritisation by Government of public expenditure and delivery of existing commitments in response to the difficult economic and fiscal environment.
- That reprioritisation is to be guided by agreed principles, including “the need to protect the most vulnerable”, and will be overseen by the T16 consultative mechanisms.
- In addition the Office for Social Inclusion is to develop proposals by mid 2009 “for performance indicators in relation to the long-term goals for each stage of the life cycle”.
- The *Agreement* recognises that public service modernisation “presents some particular challenges for the health sector”, and commits to progressing in a collaborative manner.

In the context of the disability agenda, the reaffirmation of the long term goals is welcome. However disappointment about progress to date on the initial priority measures set out in T16 for people with a disability inevitably raises apprehension about the future.

The disability sector is already working on measures to assess progress against the agreement’s long term goals. In DFI’s view, this monitoring and feedback to those responsible for services and facilities will be critical over the coming months to protect NDS priority.

The report is at www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?locID=231&docID=4033

A hard copy can be obtained by contacting DFI at 01 454 7978, or info@disability-federation.ie.

National Disability Advisory Committee

This Committee was established to link the voluntary disability organisations into the health agenda of the National Disability Strategy. As well as DSG organisations and other stakeholders, Committee members include representatives of the Departments of Health and Children, Education and Science, Enterprise and Employment and agencies such as the HSE and NDA. When the Committee meets again on 3 November, DFI intends to focus questioning on two areas.

- DFI will raise a number of funding issues at the meeting, including the real-time tracking of voted money, MAF investment in the 2009 Budget and the implications of the 1% cutbacks for voluntary organisations.

- Another focus of attention by DFI concerns the state of play regarding the second review of the Health Sectoral Plan, which should take place in 2008. Information will be sought about progress implementing the Independent Assessment of Need (IAN), particularly on the project management across Departmental boundaries to ensure coverage of 5-18 year olds by 2010. In addition, HSE efforts to measure the gaps in services as revealed by the IAN, will be scrutinised.

National Stakeholders Group (DSG) Sub Committees

For monitoring implementation of the National Disability Strategy the government established the DSG consisting of six voluntary organisations including DFI. Twice a year the DSG and senior officers from a range of Departments meet as the National Disability Strategy Stakeholder Monitoring Group (NDSSMG). They meet to review progress under the chairmanship of the Department of the Taoiseach

The DSG in 2008 set up subcommittees covering the main Departments implementing the Strategy. The remit of these sub committees is to 'trouble shoot', to gather information on progress, flagging any barriers that are impeding progress and also successes and opportunities that mark significant advances. The cross-agency aspects of achieving change are a particular focus.

The subcommittees are being activated in November to inform the DSG about critical issues to be addressed at the NDSSMG meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 19th November.

Information on NDS implementation can be sent to the person in a DSG member organisation who is the lead for the relevant subcommittee as follows:

Department of Health and Children: Deirdre Carroll at deirdre@inclusionireland.ie

Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government: Brian O'Donnell at Brian.ODonnell@fedvol.ie

Department of Enterprise & Employment: Stephen MacWhite at stephen@pwwdi.ie

Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources: Des Kenny at Desmond.kenny@ncbi.ie

Department of Transport: Marcus Hufsky at marcushufsky@disability-federation.ie

Department of Social & Family Affairs: Louise McCann at louisemccann@disability-federation.ie

Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform: Edel Tierney at edel.tierney@fedvol.ie

Department of Education & Science: Deirdre Carroll at deirdre@inclusionireland.ie

NESF project on Implementation of the Home Care Support Scheme

The NESF is a government-appointed social partnership body that provides advice on economic and social policies, especially those that seek to achieve greater equality and social inclusion in our society. The NESF have set up a project on Implementation of the Home Support Scheme. The purpose of this project is to examine the Home Care Support Scheme as a case-study of policy implementation, viewed from the perspective of outcomes. DFI are represented on the project team by Kris Dhondt, Rehab Care.

The project will be based on desk research, documentary analysis, interviewing stake holders and data analysis with selected empirical case studies at regional and / or local level.

It is hoped that the criteria for the selection of case studies and the number of case studies will be decided at the next meeting on the 19th of November.

The Department of Health is organising an evaluation of the Home Care Packages which will be carried out at the same time as this project, Mr Michael Murchan from the Department of Health and Children has said that that the department is happy to co-operate with and feed into the work of the NESF project team. The NESF project will seek to add to this evaluation and avoid duplication.

If you are interested in this project and would like to contribute ideas or opinions you are invited to contact Joan O Donnell, DFI at joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie.

National Disability Survey 2006: First Results

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has published the first results from its survey of a sample of people reporting a disability in the 2006 Census. The CSO explained that the main purpose of the survey was to establish the severity and impact of disability. This first publication gives a wealth of information about people, grouped into nine types of disability. Further information about multiple disabilities and about participation in society by people who have a disability will become available in 2009.

The survey also indicates that the Census report of 9.3% of the Irish population with a disability actually underestimates the extent of disability. The indication is an overall rate of disability in the vicinity of 18.5%, which the CSO points out is more in line with levels in other countries.

Amongst those with a disability, the percentages affected by type of disability were reported as follows:

Mobility and dexterity	56%
Pain	47%
Remembering and concentrating	35%
Emotional, psychological and mental health	34%
Intellectual and learning	21%
Breathing	21%
Hearing	18%
Seeing	16%
Speech	11%

There is information about the person with each type of disability – about their age, sex, type of accommodation, the severity of their disability, their age at its onset, causes of the disability and the kinds of aids used or needed. For example, of the people with a mobility and/or dexterity disability, 31% were using physiotherapy but 17% needed this aid but did not have it.

For the report: www.cso.ie/releasespublications/nationaldisabilitysurvey06first.htm

Local Government

Meeting with Minister Michael Kitt, T.D.

The Minister of State for Local Government, Minister Kitt, T.D. met with DFI recently in response to DFI's request to discuss the role of the City/County Development (CDB) process in implementing the National Disability Strategy. DFI was particularly concerned about the impact of reforms that the Government is planning as a result of a review by Indecon consultants of the CDB process.

The CDBs, along with their Social Inclusion Measures groups, are the vehicle created by government to promote co-ordinated planning of services at the local level. They are supported by the Local Authority with membership across a range of statutory and non statutory agencies.

At the meeting the Minister and the Departmental representative referred to the obligation on the CDB process to make disability a priority theme in their work, but systematic evidence on how the theme has actually influenced local service co-ordination had not yet been collected. They commented on the need for all local service organisations to recognise that co-operation is an integral part of their job. DFI highlighted the importance of such behaviour being promoted at national level by all Departments.

As a result of the meeting DFI is arranging to discuss with the members of the network of Directors of Service for Community and Enterprise ways of strengthening consideration of disability issues in the CDB's work.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Partnering for Success

Thursday 20th November 2008

Croke Park Conference Centre : 9am - 5pm

Conference Objectives:

The conference objectives are to share best practice between corporate and voluntary sectors and to foster and develop ongoing relationships within the sector. The conference will address key challenges for leaders in the community and voluntary sector.

Who should attend?

Leaders within the community and voluntary sector, including: management, administrators and board members.

The keynote speaker is Mark Butcher from the UK. He is a leading non-profit consultant & author of 'Latest thinking on leadership skills for surviving and thriving'. There will be breakout

Workshops: Management, Fundraising, Technology and Governance. For further information please contact The Carmichael Centre: tssinfo@carmichaelcentre.ie.

The A-Z Directory of National Voluntary Organisations and Other Agencies in Ireland

The 12th edition of the Directory of National Voluntary Organisations and Other Agencies is now available from the Citizens Information Board. From Action Aid Ireland to the New Communities Partnership - this is the definitive guide to whatever organisation working in the voluntary sector in Ireland you need to find.

With over 570 national and other organisations listed and over 100 new entries, the Directory is the most comprehensive listing of national voluntary organisations in the country. The State agencies relevant to this sector are also listed. The detailed descriptions of organisations include their role, remit and the resources they provide. The directory is also available as part of an online resource for the Voluntary & Community Sector. This is continually updated and provides a range of other useful information resources. A subject matter index makes it easy to locate organisations with similar areas of interest.

Copies of the Directory are available at €12 (plus p&p) and can be ordered by contacting the **Citizens Information Board at (01) 6059000** or by email to ***info@ciboard.ie***

The Citizens Information Board is the statutory body which supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy on the broad range of social and civil services to the public. It provides the Citizens Information website, www.citizensinformation.ie and supports the voluntary network of Citizens Information Services and the Citizens Information Phone Service, Lo-Call 1890 777 121.

Further Information: Evelyn Lee, PR / Promotions Executive, Citizens Information Board

Tel: 01 6059000, Email: evelyn.lee@ciboard.ie.

Enhancing Communications for your Organisation Training Workshops

Carmelite Community Centre,

The Wheel will be holding Training Workshops in the Carmelite Community Centre on Aungier Street on the 18th November from 9:15 am -1.00pm. (Questions and networking 12.30pm - 1.00pm).

The success of your organisation depends largely on how effectively you communicate with your supporters, the public and other stakeholders.

The workshops will look at themes such as: messaging , crisis management , relationship marketing , communication opportunities on the Internet , audience segmentation , integrated campaigning.

The advanced workshop follows on from the introductory course held in April 2008 and is aimed at persons who have a foundation knowledge of communications and the media.

Fee: Members of The Wheel: 45 euro and Non-members: 80 euro. For further information contact Tel: 01-454 8727, Website: www.wheel.ie.

“Getting to Grips with Governance”

Governing bodies be they Committees, Boards of Management, Trustees, Core Groups, Executive Committees, Management Committees, have a significant part to play in those organisations.

Governing bodies must ensure that that their organisations are both effective and accountable. Members of a governing body are there to oversee and take responsibility for everything that their organisation does. It is an important role and one not to be taken on without an understanding of what is involved.

However, it is not always easy for voluntary governing body members to find out exactly what they should be doing or how they should best carry out their duties.

There is an increasing demand from funding agencies, the state, impending changes in charity law, regulation and new codes of practice for fundraising, for community and voluntary organisations to demonstrate their ability to perform to a high standard. Organisations must be ready themselves to meet these challenges and The Wheels Getting to Grips with Governance is a direct response to this need.

The Wheels training event “*Getting to Grips with Governance*” is designed to help governing body members by:-

- Providing information about the functions that a governing body performs
- Assisting individuals to understand more about governing body roles, responsibilities and potential liabilities
- Encouraging the development and improvement of practice
- Signposting to further information and resources.

The Wheel is hosting a series of training events on “*Getting to Grips with Governance*” around the country as follows:

- Wednesday 12th November 2008 - Waterford
- Wednesday 26th November 2008 - Sligo
- Wednesday 10th December 2008 - Galway

To book to attend any of the above courses or to make any other enquiries you can contact The Wheel at: 01-454 8727 or by emailing: info@wheel.ie

The Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups Training & Support Service Management Training Programme November-December 2008

The Carmichael Centre provides an annual training programme targeting the unique needs of all those working within the community & voluntary sector, in both a volunteer and paid capacity. We aim to develop the strength of the sector by enhancing present successful work with current management methods to ensure sustainable progress of organisations into the long term.

Course Title	Date
Board Roles and Responsibilities (Cork)	13th November 2008
Chairing the Organisation	27th November 2008

Running Effective Meetings	19th November 2008
Becoming an Effective Team Leader	26th November, 2008
Taking Effective Minutes	26th November 2008
Creating a Successful Newsletter	12th November 2008
Business Writing Skills	13th November 2008
Safety Representative Skills	5th & 6th November 2008
Developing your Staff Management Skills	16th September & 4th November, 2008
Financial Reporting for Charitable Organisations New!	18th November 2008
Risk Assessment	11th December, 2008
Report Writing	3rd December 2008
Dealing with Grievance & Disciplinary Issues	4th December, 2008

For further information and a booking form, see www.carmichaelcentre.ie.

GENERAL NEWS AND EVENTS

BRÍ Support Groups

BRÍ is dedicated to advocating for all those affected by Acquired Brain Injury. BRÍ strive to ensure that all those affected by Acquired Brain Injury have the best possible quality of life. The organisation works to achieve change in terms of service provision, public awareness and prevention. BRÍ wishes to highlight their support groups around the country.

Mutual support among people with ABI and or carers / family is vital— BRÍ enables this peer support / advocacy. There are a number of support groups around Ireland that meet monthly. The group is led by people locally and is an opportunity for people affected by ABI to share experiences and learn how others cope with this disability. The groups also have a social element where people can let their hair down and enjoy themselves. The support meetings take place in the evenings around the country in Wexford, Waterford, Carlow, Roscommon, Dublin, Limerick, Donegal, Cavan / Meath, Killarney, Offaly / Laois. For further details contact BRÍ: The Acquired Brain Injuries Advocacy Association. Tel Phone: 01 235 5501.

The Carers Association: National Conference for Family Carers

The Carers Association is holding a one day Conference on November 13th. This will take place in the Davenport Hotel Merrion Square, Dublin 2. The purpose of the Conference is to present preliminary findings on research carried out by the Irish College of Psychiatrists on the affects of caring on the carers health (Dr Fintan O'Brien, Irish College of Psychiatrists). The Conference will present research findings and report on pilot project introducing standardised needs assessment for carers.

For further information contact Gina Delaney, Tel 056 7753609.

Journal of Cultural and Disability Studies

The new website of the Journal of Cultural and Literary Studies has been launched. The website address is www.jlcds.org. and previous issues of the Journal can be viewed free of charge under 'Past Issues'

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Network of PWDI

There will be a meeting of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Network of PWDI to be held **on Thursday, 13th November 2008** at 7.30pm in the **Stillorgan Park Hotel**.

PWDI is a cross disability organisation and has networks in all counties in Ireland. With over 18,000 people living with a disability in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, PWDI is well positioned to work on a cross disability basis to discuss and bring forward plans for improving the lives of all people with disabilities. For further information please contact PWDI on Tel 01 8721744.

FUNDING

Credit unions launch grant scheme for special services

Extraordinary work by organisations looking after people with special needs will be rewarded with up to €40,000 under a grants scheme launched by the Irish League of Credit Unions.

League president Uel Adair said credit unions, as long time leaders in the community, wanted to make a substantial contribution to services provided for those who have special needs.

Paralympian Michael McKillop, who achieved a gold medal in Beijing last month, said the support by credit unions was encouraging. "People with special needs have huge potential and deserve the chance to show it," he said at the launch of the Credit Union Community Chest.

Managing director of Special Olympics Europe / Eurasia, Mary Davis, congratulated credit unions for making such a positive contribution to those in their communities with special needs.

Applications are invited from community organisations and groups that operate projects locally on a not-for-profit basis with the primary aim of providing tangible benefits to persons with special needs, including physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities.

The scheme is being run on a regional basis providing a €20,000 grant in Ulster, Munster, Leinster (excluding Dublin city and county), Connacht and Dublin (encompassing both the city and county).

An overall winner from one of the five regional winners will be chosen to receive an additional €20,000 grant. Applications should describe the aims and activities of the organisation and explain how it could benefit from a €20,000 grant and how it would use an additional grant of €20,000. The official entry form must be used and is available from local credit unions and the league's website — www.creditunion.ie. The closing date for entries is Friday, November 21st.

Helping Your Organisation Fundraise through Challenging Times

With a severe economic downturn upon us, the importance of securing ample funding has never been greater. Fundingpoint.ie contains comprehensive details for almost 400 different funding schemes and has quickly become recognised as Ireland's leading online resource of funding information for the community and voluntary sector.

Fundingpoint.ie has also continued to develop since its launch in July 2008 and now features [two short video tours](#) that will teach subscribers and non-subscribers alike how to get the most out of the site.. For further information log on to www.fundingpoint.ie.

€660,000 Peace III Small Grants Scheme launched for Donegal.

Donegal Peace and Reconciliation Partnership have launched a new scheme of Small Grants for cross-border and cross-community peace and reconciliation work in Donegal. The fund will prioritise localised cross border and cross community activity that brings people from different backgrounds together around issues of common interest.

The Small Grants Scheme is part financed by the European Unions European Regional Development Fund through the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation managed by the Special EU Programmes Body, and part funded by the Irish and British governments.

Groups with an interest in Peace and Reconciliation work are asked to download a copy of the Application Form and a set of Guidelines to the Peace III Small Grants Scheme from the Donegal County Development Board website www.donegalcdb.ie .

The closing date for the Donegal PEACE III Small Grants scheme application is November 14th. Further information is available on www.donegalcdb.ie. Applicants are advised to download the Small Grants Application Form and Guidelines from the website and familiarise themselves with them prior to the Support Workshops.

For further Information contact Marie Porter, Donegal Peace III Office, Donegal County Council, Station Island, Lifford, on 07491 72232 or mporter@donegalcoco.ie.

Newsletters

For information please contact the relevant organisation directly.

Ability - Newsletter of the Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, Tel: 01 4572329, E-mail: info@iasbah.ie

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188

E-mail: info@arthritisireland.ie

Aspire - Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland. 01-8780027/9, E-mail: admin@aspire-irl.org

Asthma Society News - Tel: 01-8788511, E-mail: office@asthmasociety.ie

Brainstorm - Migraine Association of Ireland, Tel: 01-8064121, E-mail: info@migraine.ie

Brainwave - Quarterly Newsletter, Tel: 01 4557500, E-mail: info@epilepsy.ie

Care Alliance Ireland - E-mail: ndo@carealliance.ie

Clar na nÓg - National Youth Council of Ireland Tel: 01-4784122 E-mail: info@nyci.ie

Cleft Lip and Palate Association of Ireland - www.cleft.ie/newsletter/index.htm, Tel: (01) 2848227, E-mail: georginawade@cleft.ie

Community Exchange Newsletter, E-mail: info@activelink.ie, Tel: +1 667 7326

Connect - Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. E-mail: info@imnda.ie Freefone 1800 403 403

Community Workers' Co-operative – Community Work News. E-mail: info@cwci.ie, Tel: +353 (0) 91 779 030

Cornerstone - Homeless Agency - <http://www.homelessagency.ie/research/cornerstone.asp>, Tel: 01 703610 E-mail: homeless@dublincity.ie

Cumhacht - People with Disabilities in Ireland http://www.pwdi.ie/news_events/newsletter/index.htm, E-mail: info@pwdi.ie Tel: 01-8721744

Debra Ireland Newsletter, Tel: 01 678 5044, E-mail: info@debraireland.org

Down Syndrome Ireland - Tel: 01-8730999, E-mail: info@downsyndrome.ie

Enable Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 1850 204 304 E-mail: communications@enableireland.ie

Equality News - Tel: 01-4173333, E-mail: info@equality.ie

E-Info Deaf Source— E-mail: info@irishdeafociety.ie. Tel: +353 1860 18

Féach - Support to parents of blind and visually impaired children. Tel: 01 493 1896, E-mail: info@feach.ie

Fighting Blindness - Tel: 01 7093050, E-mail: avril.daly@fightingblindness.ie

Frontline of Learning Disability -Tel: 01-2862649. E-mail: frontline@indigo.ie

GROWing - Information on Mental Health, Tel: 1890 474 474, E-mail: info@grow.ie

Guidelines - Irish Guide Dogs Association. Tel: 021 4878200 E-mail: info@guidedogs.ie

Headway Ireland - National Association for Acquired Brain Injury -'Making Headway', Tel: 01-8102066, E-mail: info@headway.ie

Heart News: - Newsletter of Irish Heart Foundation. Tel: 01 668 5001 E-mail: info@irishheart.ie.

Heartstrings - Newsletter of Heart Children Ireland, published quarterly, Tel: 1850 217017 E-mail: heartchildren@eircom.net

Heatwave - Irish Raynauds Scleroderma Society, E-mail: info@irishraynauds.com, Tel: 01 2020184

HOPE - Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland. Tel: 01-872 1303, E-mail: hdai@indigo.ie

Inclusion Ireland - Tel: 01 8559891, E-mail: info@inclusionireland.ie

Irish Deaf News - Irish Deaf Society. Minicom: 01-8601910; 01-8601878; E-mail: info@irishdeafociety.ie

Irish Wheelchair Association - 'Spokeout' , Tel: 01-8186 400, E-mail: Joanna.marsden@iwa.ie

Kerry Network of People with Disabilities - Network News 066-7180611, E-mail: kerrypwdi@eircom.net

MS News—Newsletter of MS Ireland. Tel: 01 6781600, E-mail: info@ms-society.ie

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland - MDI News Update Tel: 01-8721501, E-mail: info@mdi.ie

DeafHear.ie - Link Magazine - Tel: 01 8723800, E-mail: info@deafhear.ie, Minicom: (01) 817 5777

NCBI News - Newsletter of the National Council for the Blind of Ireland, Tel: 01 8307033, E-mail: press@ncbi.ie, www.ncbi.ie

Neuro News - Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland, Tel: 01-8726338, E-mail: nfaireland@eircom.net

People First - Central Remedial Clinic Tel: 01-8057400 E-mail: vmcutch@crc.ie

Post Polio Support Group - Newsletter, Tel: 071 64791 E-mail: newsletter@ppsg.ie

Poverty Today - Combat Poverty Agency. Tel:01-670 6746

Rehab News -Tel: 01-2057200 E-mail: dara.duffy@rehab.ie

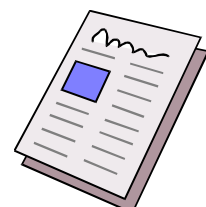
Simon News - Simon Community, Tel: 01-6711606 E-mail: info@simoncommunity.com

S.I. News - Schizophrenia Ireland, Tel: (0)1 8601620 E-mail: info@sirl.ie

Social Housing - Irish Council for Social Housing Tel: 01-6618334; E-mail: info@icsh.ie

Speaking up for Advocacy - Comhairle Newsletter on advocacy. Tel: 01 6059035, E-mail: mairide.woods@comhairle.ie or davin.roche@comhairle.ie

Volunteer Stroke Scheme News- Tel: 01-4559036. E-mail: info@strokescheme.ie
Wheel E-Bulletin Tel:01- 454 8727, E-mail: info@wheel.ie





Disability Federation of Ireland is a national support and representation mechanism for voluntary disability sector organisations, covering all areas of disability and disabling conditions. There are currently over 100 voluntary disability organisations in the DFI Membership.

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